



Cheriton Fitzpaine Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113064
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279086
Inspection dates 21 June 2006 to 21 June 2006
Reporting inspector Geoff Burgess AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior	School address	Cheriton Fitzpaine
School category	Community		Crediton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX17 4JD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01363 866456
Number on roll	83	Fax number	01363 866456
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Harris

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school serving a rural area. A promised, much needed replacement to its picturesque but sub-standard accommodation has been on hold since 2003. This is a real barrier to learning and improvement. The number on roll has gone down due to a falling birth rate. Almost all of the pupils in the four classes are White British. A below average number of pupils have free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is above average, with two having statements of special need. In most years, few pupils leave or join the school. With small numbers involved, attainment on entry to the Reception class is very dependant on the numbers of pupils who start school with learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which provides satisfactory value for money, confirming the view of the head and governing body. However, all judgements have to be made in the context of a staff trying to provide a 21st century education in unsuitable 17th century accommodation. The school's strengths lie in the enrichment activities it provides, its pastoral care for all pupils and in their positive attitudes and good behaviour. Parents are very supportive of the staff and extremely pleased that their children are happy in school. Despite the school's best efforts, significant areas of the curriculum are severely limited by the accommodation, which makes the curriculum unsatisfactory overall. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

Achievement overall is satisfactory so that Year 6 pupils achieve average results in national tests, having started school with average abilities. However, pupils fall behind a little in Years 1 and 2 and catch up again in Years 3 to 6. Fewer pupils than might be expected achieve higher standards. Teaching is satisfactory overall but stronger in the older classes than in the younger, as is the use of assessment.

Recent pupil outcomes indicate that leadership and management are satisfactory. However, this judgement masks the severe constraints under which leaders and managers are having to work. The head and governors have done well to maintain standards, sustain morale and keep trying to do their best for pupils. Recent moves to invest in improving facilities and arrangements for pupils now in school show that the school is looking to the future and capable of making further improvements where possible.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards achieved by more able pupils throughout the school by increasing expectations and providing more challenging work.
- Focus on improving achievement in Years 1 and 2 so that standards can be closer to the national average by making better use of information gained from assessment to set challenging targets.
- Continue to make the best of the existing accommodation while making every effort to bring forward the promised rebuild so that pupils can enjoy all the learning opportunities to which they are entitled.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most pupils achieve broadly average standards by the time they move on to secondary school. With school records showing that these children started school with either average standards, or a little below, this represents sound progress. Children in the reception class are making satisfactory progress though their physical development is hampered by a lack of facilities. Seven-year-olds have achieved below average results in national testing over the past five years. Current work confirms that pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially potentially higher achievers, are not achieving as well as they could.

Year 3 contains a high proportion of pupils with special needs and standards are well below average. Standards in Year 4 are much higher and this group has made good progress over the year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made good progress in the top class and should achieve average standards in national tests. However, more able pupils are not achieving as well as might be expected and few pupils attain higher grades in national tests. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported in and out of the classrooms to ensure that they do as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is good and pupils play very sensibly in the small playground. Even though opportunities to come together as a whole school are infrequent, the pupils get on well together. They enjoy school and attendance is above average. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Staff work hard to provide a range of opportunities to broaden these aspects of pupils' learning, for example, during the 'Activities Week', but weaknesses in the accommodation limit the options. Pupils make a good contribution to their school through helping with jobs and offering ideas and suggestions at fortnightly Year Group meetings. These show pupils know about keeping safe in and out of school, and that food and exercise are important in keeping a healthy lifestyle. Pupils demonstrate good awareness of road safety by using high visibility tabards when they walk between the main school and School House. Pupils steadily develop the skills that they need for their next stage in learning and later life but opportunities to use computers are limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, as revealed in the satisfactory progress pupils make. However, the teaching staff, half of whom are newly-qualified, work under exceptionally difficult circumstances in unsuitable accommodation that makes for a difficult learning environment. The strongest teaching is in the two older classes. Though teaching in the two younger classes is broadly satisfactory, it is sometimes not challenging or pacy enough, especially for higher achieving pupils. This is partly explained by a lack of accurate on-going assessment information. Sound use is made of teaching assistants especially in supporting pupils who need extra help. Teachers use the new interactive white boards very well as teaching aids but problems with the equipment and the buildings mean that not enough use is being made of information technology for learning across the curriculum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

Deficiencies in space, storage and access to resources are having a directly negative impact upon the curriculum that can be provided and are hindering pupils' progress. In this difficult context, the staff work hard to provide pupils with a good range of activities in lessons, and there are good aspects to the school's curriculum, such as the excellent range of additional activities at Golden Time. However, Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are rightly frustrated about the amount of time they spend walking down the road when they could be learning. They are dispirited about the lack of space in their classroom and in the playground and that they cannot use computers as an integral part of learning.

Important aspects of the curriculum are not adequately covered. For instance, children in Reception do not have an outdoor play area and there are no push-pull toys because there is not enough space. There is no suitable space on site, or in the village, for indoor physical education or the performing arts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This area is satisfactory overall, with strengths in how the school cares for individual pupils. Good features are fortnightly year group meetings where pupils meet with an adult, other than their teacher, to share their thoughts, ideas and opinions. This is a good way of checking that pupils are learning to keep safe and healthy, and also learning important social skills. Home-school books promote pupils' care and guidance well, providing a helpful link between the school and pupils' families. Pupils who have difficulties with behaviour are well supported. The school uses a good range of strategies to help them succeed and be included. Pupils are assessed regularly and the results from tests collated. However, this is more successful in Years 3 to 6 than the lower year groups. Arrangements for child protection are good. The school works hard to make sure pupils learn in a safe environment, but the restrictions of the building make this difficult to cover as well as the school would wish.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's solid track record in recent years indicates that the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. However, this does not reflect the massive efforts made by the headteacher, well supported by the deputy head and governors, to maintain standards, the quality of provision and morale while pressing for a desperately needed new school. Combined with a falling roll necessitating staff changes, this has made the past few years a challenge for the leadership of the school. However, the school is held in high regard by its stakeholders, as shown by very strong support expressed by parents and by the local community notably, and eloquently, by village organisations.

A great difficulty has been in planning for the future when the future is so uncertain. This was further compounded by the very late resignation of an established teacher in 2005, which resulted in the appointment of two newly qualified teachers and another reorganisation of the school. The opportunity this presented has been well exploited and the school is pleased with the energy and new ideas the new teachers have brought. This development has also brought new focus to the school's monitoring and professional development arrangements, involving staff and governors, which were already well established. The governance of the school is good with active governors providing much needed moral and practical support.

Leaders and managers have now resolved to make the best of a bad job in the current accommodation. With initiatives such as 'Golden Hour' activities, the introduction of interactive whiteboards, and the plans to make the school accessible for pupils with disabilities, the school is definitely moving forward. The leadership recognises that it now needs to re-focus on raising standards, especially in the younger classes and among higher achievers.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel so welcome. It was a shame we missed a lot of you on your day out at the seaside. Don't worry though, Class 4, we really do understand why you get so frustrated at having so little space in the School House and having to waste so much time going up and down the street.

This is what I liked most about your school:

- Everybody gets on really well together.
- Your behaviour is good and you try hard.
- All the extra activities your teachers and helpers arrange for you.
- All the adults in the school know you and look after you really well.
- Your headteacher and all the other teachers and helpers are working hard to make sure your time in school is as happy and positive as possible.

To make things even better, this is what I have asked your school to do now:

- Help pupils who are already good at reading, writing and maths to do even better.
- Make it possible for you to learn a bit faster in Class 1 and Class 2.
- Make the best of the old school but keep on trying to get a new one built.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the summer and that your new school gets built soon.